

the work in question, using its plenary powers; (b) accept those names as from their first subsequent publication as available names; or (c) accept the next names made available for the same taxa. Dr Silfverberg has chosen to propose course (b). This seems to me consistent with the original intent of Opinion 228, which was to reject Geoffroy's work as being not consistently binominal, and therefore to signify a continuity of policy that is in itself desirable. Since it is accepted by Dr Kerzhner and Dr Thompson that the meanings of the generic names are not affected and that the issue they raise is a merely formal one of author and date, the Commission should be offered their proposal as an alternative to Dr Silfverberg's.

COMMENT ON THE PROPOSED REJECTION OF LACEPÈDE'S
"HISTOIRE NATURELLE DES SERPENS". Z.N.(S.) 1985

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Brongersma, 1972, *Bull. zool. Nom.* vol. 29, pp. 44-61, reviewed in depth the composition, sources and subsequent editions and reprintings of Lacepède's work on snakes, originally published as part of the "Suites à Buffon" in 1780-1790. This communication is a response to the Brongersma proposals. In the following, to avoid unnecessary repetition, I use the same references cited by Brongersma.

Although Brongersma's application to the Commission involves seven items, these may be grouped into two: (1) a request to reject all of Lacepède's works on snakes as being non-binominal; (2) if the works are not rejected, then to suppress one generic and five trivial names proposed by Lacepède, which are nomina oblita. This is now a plenary powers matter.

Savage, 1952, Savage & Oliver, 1952, and Mertens, 1958, argued in favour of interpreting Lacepède's works as binominal. Nevertheless, after reviewing Brongersma's argument and reanalysing Lacepède's books, I am forced to agree that there is substantial question regarding the conformity of these works to a consistently binominal mode as required by Article 11c of the Code.

The second set of questions raised by Brongersma, (a) the priority of *Coluber flavocaeruleus*, *Coluber oularsawa* and *Coluber oryzivorus* (all of Lacepède, 1789) over the well-established name *Boa reticulata* Schneider, 1801 for the Indian rock python; (b) the priority of the generic name *Langaha* Lacepède, 1789 over *Langaha* Bonnaterre, 1790; and (c) the priority of *Langaha langaha* Lacepède, 1789 over *Langaha madagascariensis* Bonnaterre, 1790 and *L. nasuta* Shaw, 1802, is completely resolved if Lacepède is suppressed.

The only reasonable alternative to the situation is to:

1. Rule that Lacepède's 1780-90 *Histoire naturelle des Serpens*, is not consistently binominal and should be placed on the Official Index of Rejected Works in Zoology.

2. Refuse to approve Brongersma's request regarding the

suppression of *Langaha madagascariensis* Bonnatere, 1790, but instead place that name on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology.

Only the last item needs explanation. The name *Langaha madagascariensis* Bonnatere, 1790, has priority over *L. nasuta*, Shaw, 1802. No confusion can possibly result since the genus is monotypic and restricted to Madagascar; *L. nasuta* is not a name of wide usage in ecological, physiological or general works; indeed, the name *madagascariensis* more readily identifies the species than *nasuta*.

The result of these actions in no way affects any names conserved under Opinion 524 and supports the result of Opinion 525.

COMMENT ON THE PROPOSED CONSERVATION OF *NETTASTOMELLA*
CARPENTER, 1865 (BIVALVIA). Z.N.(S.)1054
(see vol. 37, pp. 114-116)

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We feel that the Commission should reject the petition to conserve *Nettastomella* Carpenter, 1865. The best interests of nomenclatural stability will not be served by the suppression of the earlier *Netastoma* Carpenter, 1864. The recent works listed in the petition by Coan & Kennedy (McLean, 1969; Keen & Coan, 1974; Coan & Carlton, 1975), all of which use the older name, are currently the standard references for the Californian Province. To them can be added McLean, J.H., 1978, Marine seashells of southern California, *Los Angeles Mus. nat. Hist. sci. Ser. no. 24*, 104 pp. 54 figs. Further, the Law of Priority is a fundamental precept of the code of nomenclature and any overruling of it should occur only in instances of clear non-usage of an older name. This is certainly not the case with this problem.

We therefore request the Commission (1) to place the earlier name *Netastoma* Carpenter, 1864 (gender: neuter), type species, by monotypy, *Pholas darwinii* G.B. Sowerby II, 1849, on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology, and (2) to place the specific name *darwinii* G.B. Sowerby II, 1849, as published in the binomen *Pholas darwinii*, on the Official List of Specific Names in Zoology.